

SICC MEETING MINUTES

Truman Building, Room 400

January 11, 2008

Members Present

Joyce Jackman
Dr. Patsy Carter
Lisa Robbins
Wendy Witcig
Joyce Sims

Leslie Elpers
Kathy Fuger
Amy Kessel
Melinda Sanders
Tec Chapman

Carolyn Stemmons
Jodi Arnold (alternate –
attended by invitation of
the Council)

Members Not Present

Doug Ommen
Kim Oligschlaeger

Senator Scott Rupp
Carissa Mattern

Pamela Speer
Paula Neese

DESE Staff Present

Dale Carlson
CJ Hubbard

Bill Connelly
Margaret Strecker

Mary Corey
Judy Goans

To review copies of handouts referenced in the minutes below, go to the following website:
<http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FirstSteps/SICCpage.html> and click on “Handouts” for the
November 9, 2007 meeting.

Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions – Lisa Robbins brought the meeting to order at 8:45 and thanked Kathy Fuger for filling in as chairperson in Lisa’s absence at the SICC meeting in November. Introductions were made. Jodi Arnold was introduced to the group as Kathy Fuger’s alternate, although her participation at this time would be to serve as an alternate for Elizabeth Spaug’s unfilled parent term. Jodi is a parent of a child with a disability and she was invited to the council meeting today for her perspective as a parent. Tec Chapman has taken the place of Debra Fiasco on the SICC as Debra has transferred to St. Louis.

Approval of the SICC Minutes – Lisa Robbins asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the November meeting. Dr. Patsy Carter made a motion and Joyce Sims seconded the motion. Motion passed.

DESE Update – Joyce Jackman reported that the Missouri First Steps fiscal year summary handout was presented last year to the SICC with a compilation of data, number of referrals, children we are serving, active IFSPs as of December 1, and other information that DESE felt was important to make available to the public as a quick resource. The information was also available on the DESE website as a resource for the legislature and the general public. DESE has updated this information with the fiscal year 2007 information. Joyce asked if the SICC would be interested in receiving a hard copy of this information again. The SICC members agreed that

they would like a copy again this year so the handouts will be available at the SICC meeting in April.

Joyce called the State Boards and Commissions again to check on the status of appointments to the SICC and to date has not received any specific information from that office. Melinda Sanders reported that she recently received a letter appointing her to the SICC and a member of the audience reported that a parent in southwest Missouri was sent a packet to complete and return for processing.

Joyce met recently with the Missouri Department of Insurance (DOI). Linda Bohrer, DOI, is unable to attend the meeting today but Joyce reported that they are in the final stages of preparing the annual report that is due to the General Assembly by January 31. A draft has been prepared and is in the final stages of edit. DESE will e-mail the final report to the members of the SICC. The report contains all available information and data from this past year's insurance billing. The CFO sent invoices to the insurance companies who elected a lump sum or percentage payment for this calendar year and the amount invoiced is up from last year's 1.5 million to 2.1 million. We continue to receive rejected claims at the clearinghouse level and the CFO continues to work on these individual issues. We also receive some denials for reasons which are not allowable under SB 500 and continue to work closely with DOI to resolve the issues. The DOI Market Conduct Review Section understands the First Steps legislation and each time they conduct an audit of an insurance company they ask the company if they are complying with Senate Bill 500 requirements.

The new transition training module is on the DESE website and nearly ready for providers to take. As soon as all edits are completed, providers and SPOE offices will be notified. There will be no charge. If a provider completed the previous transition training, DESE would like them to take the new training because it contains more updated and comprehensive information. We are requiring that all service coordinators take it whether they have had the previous training or not. Providers should complete the module within 6 months and service coordinators within 3 months. DESE is considering providing all module training at no cost.

DESE is working with the Department of Social Service and Amy Kessel to update our interagency agreements regarding Medicaid.

Joyce met with the area directors on January 9, 2008 and together they went over the 2008 calendar year and what they would like to accomplish. They identified four areas for focus in 2008.

- The primary service provider (PSP) model will be the focus of additional training from Dr. Robin McWilliam in March. Dr. McWilliam will conduct a two-day training retreat for approximately 100 select individuals from across the state. There will be at least 1 team from each SPOE region and regions without a formed team will send a smaller group of interested people who can take information back to the region. In addition, the area directors will be trained to conduct this training so that continued implementation can occur in the state without the direct support of Dr. McWilliam. Joyce stated that she would like to pull everyone away from their comfort zone and spend 2 concentrated days on working through the issues for effective home visits and the PSP model. DESE will be using State Improvement Grant (SIG) dollars to pick up all the costs associated with the workshop.
- Another focus for the area directors addresses Autism Spectrum Disorder. DESE is working with the Thompson Center and Mid-Missouri Rapid Response to provide

training on identifying autism in young children. The area directors will be arranging overview training for each of their regions related to identifying the early signs of autism and screening for this disability.

- The third area identified involves transition from Part C to Part B. The new transition module will contain more targeted information on the transition from Part C to Part B. Also, the next *Parent Connections Newsletter* will focus on transition information for parents. The first addition of the *Provider Connections Newsletter* will also contain information on transition.
- The fourth area is the eligibility tool. We currently have several locations where we have providers using the Developmental Assessment of Young Children (DAYC) as an eligibility tool. We anticipate positive results and expect to move toward using the standardized eligibility tool statewide. The area directors will assist with training for this tool.

A question was asked as to whether DESE has a timeline on the DAYC and Joyce said no. The DAYC is looking very strong in terms of feedback and we might consider purchasing them. DESE will look into putting these into our SPOE office because the eligibility determinations are handled at the SPOE level.

Lisa Robbins asked if she could see the PowerPoint presentation on autism developed by the Thompson Center as she is currently conducting training in Kansas City on autism and wanted to see if the information she was giving was consistent with the Thompson Center. Joyce said that she could provide the SICC the PowerPoint presentation when it is completed. Joyce stated that one of the issues Mid-Missouri Rapid Response has is finding a way to educate folks on autism and the First Steps area directors became a viable option for some statewide training. First Steps has a need to help service coordinators understand the early signs of autism and the available tools to help with early detection. Tec Chapman suggested that the SICC contact someone to talk to the group about the report released in December from the Blue Ribbon Panel on Autism. It was also suggested that the screening tool *Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (M-CHAT)* be used to assist SPOE staff in early identification.

Joyce attended the OSEP Early Childhood Conference in Washington in December. She stated that one of the things that she found most interesting was that a survey of state Part C Coordinators indicated that 20 percent of states are looking at changing eligibility criteria to a more restrictive level. In addition, a number of states are seriously thinking of pulling out of the federal program because they feel that they can provide an effective early intervention program without the restrictions of the federal law. Several of the break-out sessions dealt with insurance and several states are looking at including family cost participation and insurance billing to their programs. A panel member at the conference suggested that other states look at Missouri and their language in SB500. Joyce said that she felt our state was already addressing many of the issues that were discussed. All the states at the conference indicated that they have a provider shortage problem.

Financial Update - Dale Carlson indicated this report reflects activity through December. The "A" report reflects an expenditure increase of 58% from November to December in direct service costs. Direct services, typically \$1.2 million to \$1.3 million monthly, jumped to \$2.5 million in December. Dale stated that this is primarily due to the December 7 catch up payment for the provider rate increase back to July 1 for all the authorizations that had been submitted under the old provider rate schedule. The January payment should return to a more normal level. Upcoming January revenues will show the first draw down from insurance and family cost participation in FY 2008 of approximately \$1.5 million. Additional data shown at the bottom of

the report is the preliminary December 1 child count of 3,441 children. While this is not a final number, it should be very close to final and shows a slight increase (+225) in kids from FY07. Also, the provider mileage line from July to November reflects updated expenditures based on the most current data available. Previous budget reports did not reflect actual costs as final numbers were not available at the time of the reports. Provider mileage costs are running significantly less than what was projected, most likely due to procedures providers have in place to write off this business costs. Given the discussions over the past several years concerning the need for mileage reimbursement and how the lack of provider paid mileage contributed to the NPA issue, it does not appear that the mileage increase has had any significant impact on the provider issue. A question was asked about the availability of current NPA data. The No Provider Available (NPA) report is posted monthly on the DESE website. Another number to point out on the "A" report is the Evaluation/Assessment line which shows an increase from \$84,935 in November to \$162,916 in December. This increase most likely reflects the provider rate increase. At this point, we are halfway through the year and roughly halfway through the budget and the revenue is holding up very well.

The "B" report also reflects the increase in direct service cost from November to December. Our total fiscal year cost to date for direct services is \$9.5 million (\$1.6 million per month) compared to \$7.6 million in FY07 (\$1.2 million per month). While revenue appears to be strong, we still need to keep an eye on available funds and expenditures. We won't begin to see the annual impact of the provider rate increase and provider mileage costs until the February/March time frame. While Medicaid billing has been pretty unpredictable to this point, we expect it to begin to stabilize. We have asked the Central Finance Office (CFO) to provide a schedule of billings for both private and Medicaid for the upcoming year. You will notice that we have not been drawing down the Part C dollars as these funds are basically a payor of last resort. Part C funds are available if we have a need to draw against them. At this point, they are basically being held in reserve. Our intent is to utilize the majority of federal funds for direct services. We are fortunate here in Missouri with the financial support First Steps receives from the state. Few states fund their early intervention program beyond a match of federal dollars. A suggestion was made to change the term "child count" to "child claims" on the report. Dale said that he would make that change and the revised report placed on the web would reflect this change.

Compliance Update - CJ Hubbard reported that the compliance section has completed 2 cyclical monitorings of the 5 SPOE offices. DESE has monitored SPOE Region 3 and Region 6 and the corresponding DMH Regional Centers and no corrective action plans were necessary for the SPOE or the DMH offices. DESE will be monitoring SPOE 9 next week. In February they will be monitoring SPOE 1 and in March SPOE 2. After that our cyclical monitoring will be done for this year. DESE doesn't look at timelines during the cyclical monitorings. DESE does acknowledge that there are some issues on the timelines, particularly on the transition timelines, which cause a problem for all SPOE offices. The new transition module should help with meeting these timelines and help explain why we have the transition meeting. Missouri does use a more stringent timeline than OSEP requires. If we adopted the OSEP requirements we probably wouldn't be out of compliance on this timeline. CJ stated that DESE is seriously looking to adopt the federal standard when we change the state plan. DESE did post the standards and indicators on our website and they can be obtained electronically. The compliance staff is currently investigating one child complaint on proper procedures after a referral was made.

SPOE Operations

- SPOE Region 2 stated that they are working on their upcoming legislative breakfast.
- SPOE Region 3 reported that they will be having a meet and greet in Chillicothe.

RICC Reports

- Region 1 RICC reported that their child find activities continue to be productive and are increasing the number of referrals that they receive. They are continuing their efforts in regards to the pilot position of the Child Find Coordinator. Their public awareness committee outlined their goals for 2008. New leadership is being sought for the chair position.
- Region 2 RICC reported that they are still looking for two individuals in the medical profession and two parents for their RICC. The regional child find gave several presentations in their area.
- Region 1 and 2 RICC are continuing to collaborate on a DVD featuring various First Steps families. Their Collaboration Across Communities group will be focusing on provider recruitment this year. Plans are being finalizing for the upcoming legislative breakfast.
- Region 5 RICC reported that they are still continuing to look at filling several Member At Large positions. Referrals in their SPOE area increased in the fall but declined slightly in December before the holidays. They are encouraging everyone to speak to their local physician to help them identify what services First Steps can provide to local families. A “tip of the month” is now being sent to providers to help them better understand the First Steps system.
- Region 7 reported that they have been putting out brochures in grocery stores and pharmacies to help spread the news about First Steps. Jen Coleman has stepped down from the RICC and Sarah Johnson will be taking her place. The student loan committee continues to look at some different colleges to take this on as an undergraduate study. Jen has compiled an RICC contact list that she will be sending out soon. Sarah and Jen have been discussing different ways to help with transition training for the families in their region.

All the RICC's stated that they are struggling with parent involvement. Most of the active parents in their RICC's have already graduated out of First Steps. It was suggested that during the First Steps transition meeting the SPOE offices could start talking to parents about leadership possibilities.

Jenny Hatfield-Reed was a guest of the SICC from the University of Missouri Kansas City with the Institute for Human Development. Ms. Hatfield-Reed brought folders for each SPOE office and explained how they could request information from her office with the enclosed order form. The folders were published with funding from the Missouri Department of Mental Health, Missouri First Steps, Missouri Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, Missouri Protection and Advocacy Services, and the UMKC-Institute for Human Development, UCEDD. Ms. Reed explained to the group the different types of services that are available through her office for families in Missouri.

Member Issues - The group discussed the continuing challenges of parent participation in the SICC. The group considered whether they would be better served with families whose children have already graduated from the First Steps program. Joyce recommended that the council look at the current by-laws, compare to the federal requirements related to parent participation and determine what latitude the council has for parent members. Joyce stated that we may be targeting First Steps families that have too much on their plate now to be able to commit to the SICC. In the long run we need to resolve how to fill the capacity for parents to join the SICC or the RICC. Kathy Fuger made a motion to establish a subcommittee to explore the idea of

improving parent leadership or mentorship that will strengthen parent involvement in the RICCs and the SICC. The group should meet prior to the next SICC meeting and report back on their discussions. Wendy Witcig seconded the motion. Motion passed. Kathy Fuger, Joyce Sims, Joyce Jackman, Melinda Sanders, and Lisa Robbins agreed to participate on this subcommittee. A conference call will be arranged.

The council discussed the co-chair issues. Our only parent member, Carissa Mattern, has indicated that she is unable take on the co-chair position at this time. Lisa Robbins is currently one meeting away from the end of her term as co-chair of the SICC. According to our by-laws, we would have a parent currently serving as co-chair to continue with a new provider co-chair at the end of Lisa's term. Joyce suggested that we need a subcommittee to look at the by-laws and suggest possible solutions to current situation. This subcommittee could also serve as the nominating committee for the co-chair positions. In the interim we may need to ask Lisa to stay on and conduct the July meeting. Wendy Witcig made a motion to establish a subcommittee to look at the bylaws and make nominations for the positions of co-chairpersons. Kathy Fuger seconded the motion. Motion passed. Wendy Witcig, Joyce Jackman, Melinda Sanders and Lisa Robbins agreed to be on this task force.

Old Business – Comprehensive Review of the February 1, 2008 SPP/APR – Mary Corey and Margaret Strecker presented a PowerPoint overview of the draft State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Plan (APR). The SPP/APR must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education by February 1, 2008. The APR covers the 2006-2007 fiscal year. The SPP is a 6 year plan and addresses 14 indicators as required by the Office of Special Education (OSEP). This report shows the progress the state has made in meeting its targets. The SICC may submit a certificate stating that they agree with the APR that DESE presents today or they must make their own annual report. Mary and Margaret discussed each indicator through the PowerPoint presentation. It was suggested that the wording in the First Steps family survey be changed from Procedural Rights to Parent Rights so that families will not be confused by the wording. It was also suggested that the survey be given directly to the family by the service coordinator to insure that the family understands the importance of the survey and that they return it to DESE.

DESE has also submitted the APR to our federally funded North Central Regional Resource Center to look at it as an unbiased 3rd party and offer us any suggestions. The state has a brand new OSEP contact this year so we have added some explanations as to how our program works so that she will have a better understanding of First Steps. OSEP has also instituted a new process for this year giving each state a one week window to clear up any misinformation with their OSEP contact person regarding the report.

Lisa Robbins asked if the SICC wanted to vote to accept the APR report, without any major changes, as their annual report to OSEP. The APR report was discussed by the members of the council. Lisa Robbins asked for a motion from the SICC to accept this report. Leslie Elpers made a motion and Melinda Sanders seconded the motion. Motion passed with Joyce Jackman abstaining. Joyce will e-mail Lisa the certification statement for her signature.

Lisa asked that any items for the next agenda be e-mailed to her.

Lisa asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joyce Jackman made a motion with Melinda Sanders seconding the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 2:20.